

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1869.

Subject: Authority of Right over Wrong.

PLYMOUTH PULPIT:

A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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AUTHORITY OF RIGHT OVER WRONG

SUNDAY EVENING, MAY 23, 1869.

"AND behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?"—MATT. viii. 29.

THIS scene is more dramatically drawn out in the corresponding passage in the 5th chapter of Mark's gospel, which I will read, in order that you may have the full context:

"And they came over unto the other side of the sea"—the sea of Galilee—"into the country of the Gadarenes"—over against the south-east part of the sea. "And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshiped him"—not in our sense of the term *worship*, but in the oriental sense—that of prostration—"and cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. (For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.) And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea. And they that fed the swine

fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts."

You will observe, in the first place, that this was not a work of authority done by our Master in his own country. He had gone out of the nation and its territory. He had, therefore, no right, as men regarded rights, to meddle with affairs on the other side. For men undertook to parcel out rights. They belonged, according to human construction, within certain metes and bounds—certain lines and limitations; and our Master, both there and at home, forbore meddling with political institutions and regulations. But he held, both in his own country and among the Gadarenes, that truth knew no bounds and no limitations; and that moral purity had universal authority; and that wherever he went he was sovereign over minds, over evil spirits, over corrupt habits; and that he had a right to rebuke, and cleanse, and reform.

That which was true of the Master is true still of the disciple. Every man that has the truth owes it to all mankind; and the debt must be paid as fast and as far as the providence of God opens the way, and makes it possible. Every man that is superior to another man in his moral instincts has natural authority over that man to the extent to which he is superior. Every man that is more industrious and better ordered in his life, and has a higher tone of sentiment in matters of public weal; every man that is better in any and all respects, has no right of domination; but he has rights that belong to superiorities; and among these is the right of letting his light shine; the right of rebuke; the right of cleansing; the right of propagating moral power wherever he goes.

This is not a right that can be given to a man by men. For convenience, it may be best that there should be some order for doing it; it may be well that men should be licensed to speak, and make known the truth; but the right of the matter lies in the intrinsic prerogatives and authorities of moral states. And whoever has given him of God intelligence, and moral truth, and moral power, is ordained and permitted of God to make them known. The right is not imparted by man; it is not committed in trust to any body; it inheres in the moral constitution of things; it is latent in every man that has these things. And he has not only a right to make them known, but it is his *duty* to do it.

The spectacle which our Master beheld when he first pressed his

foot upon this foreign territory, was the most piteous that can be looked upon—a man in ruins. There is nothing sadder; and, sad to say, nothing more common. No one can see great desolation by conflagration without having a kind of commercial sympathy. The consumption of so much property, the waste and ruin of so many costly structures, is painful to behold. No man can learn that a storm has swept the sea, and that fleets and merchantmen have been wrecked or foundered, without a certain sadness. And yet all the ships on the sea might sink, and all the buildings on the globe might be burned, and the united whole would not be as much as to shatter one immortal soul. There is nothing in old dilapidated cities, there is nothing in temples filled with memorials of former glory, that tends to inspire such sadness and melancholy as to look upon a dilapidated soul, whose powers and faculties are shattered and cast down. Nothing is more calculated to stir up whatever is noble and whatever is sanitary in the moral part of one's nature. And when our Master beheld such scenes as these, they seemed to clothe him—if such a thing were possible—with more than usual power and more than usual zeal.

In this case there were other elements added to the trouble. Not alone were the man's faculties darkened; he was not merely possessed by demoniac influences, and despotized by them; but it seems that he was perpetually turned against himself. These demoniac influences employed their power to set the man's nature against his own flesh, and to drive him hither and thither. They not only restrained his intellectual and spiritual freedom, but they turned all the forces of his being to torment. "Night and day"—and surely, there never was a description so dramatic—"he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones." He wandered about in desolate places, and among the rocks, filling the air with his cries, and gashing himself—a most wretched creature. If ever there was a sight that should have drawn out sympathy, this was it—and it did.

But the moment our Saviour came into the presence of this man, he brought a disturbing force. Two spheres came together that were, and ever must be, antagonistic—the infernal and the supernal; the divine and the demoniac. Afar off these possessing spirits discerned the coming of their master. Afar off their fears prophesied their fate. And they set up a howling resistance at his very first appearance. "What have we to do with thee?" What hast thou to do with us? is the equivalent and the meaning of it. "Art thou come hither to torment us before our time?"

In the light of facts which I shall allude to, this latent claim is remarkable. It is as if the spirits had said to Christ, "We admit

that thou art Lord of the realm ; but the other life is appointed for punishment. Here we have rights. This is our time. Freedom belongs to us here, and we are to be permitted to follow our bent, and are not to be meddled with. If it were the other life, and the other punitive world, we should recognize the justice and the rectitude of it ; but why meddle with us now and here ? Let us alone. This is our brief period. Why intrude upon it ? These are our rights. Why meddle with them ?" The very worst, the most satanic influence, that was employing itself to degrade and destroy human life, claimed not only the right to do it, but that it was divine impertinence in Christ to intrude and meddle.

You here find the key-note of the opposition in modern society to every attempt to make men better. Here is the text that evil-doers preach incessantly to reformers. All truth that is striving against lies is met by the question, " Art thou come to torment us before our time ?" All efforts to cleanse impurity by purity are met by the same plea. All endeavors to make straight the crooked and warped and rheumatic joints of society are met with the declaration, " We have rights that must not be meddled with. This is our period and our sphere. Art thou come to torment us before our time ? Get away. Do not meddle with us. Mind your business. Let us have our own rights. And as to the future, we will take care of that when it comes."

Here is where that began. It is from the devil's inspiration that men derive these notions with which they resist every attempt at reformation and at the elevation of human affairs. The appetites and the malign passions dominate and demonize the soul. They rule not only men but societies. We look at this single instance, and, because demoniac influence resulted in disease, and disease perverted the natural faculty, and interfered with all right and proper use of the individual, we are affected ; but we perceive precisely the same things and things that if possible are more mournful, going on around us ; and because they do not address themselves to our senses, we scarcely notice them.

Ah ! how sensuous men are yet ! How little men live in the spirit, and how much by their bodily life, is proved by this, that if you show them a mangled body, that is suffering, and gives signs of it by distortions and groans, they are vehemently excited with pity, and are helpful ; but that if you show them a man that is suffering a thousand times more in nature and soul, because these things are invisible, and only to be discerned by the moral sense, they are but very little affected. If one single man were to be manifest to us as this demonized man was to Christ, whole communities would feel profoundly affected ; but when there are entire classes, when there is a vast under-stratum in

human society, when not single individuals, but hundreds and thousands of men, are supremely possessed of the demon of intemperance, of avarice, of lust, or of brutal cruelties, men see it, and are scarcely moved. They are used to it. It always has been so. It was so when they were born. It was so in their fathers' day. It has been so during all their days. Therefore, when they behold it, they are not affected any more than the Gadarenes were when they saw the wretched state of this poor fellow in the mountains. They had got used to it, and it no longer excited their pity or compassion.

There are those in this community who represent intemperance, and gluttony, and lust, and vagrancy. The number is very great; and they have by these very elements come to great influence. Indeed, the vital struggle of these cities to-day is to decide which class shall possess the power of organized society—the men who are basilar, or the men who are coronal; the men whose instincts are brutal, or the men who represent moral and spiritual truths. The question is, Who shall own the Legislature? Who shall control the municipal government? Who shall make the laws? Who shall be the magistrate, and execute the laws? Which way shall society exert its force? Shall it give itself and its influence for the augmentation and protection of the lowest elements in society, or for the development and stimulation of the moral and spiritual qualities? There is a large number of men that represent brutal sports, criminal excitements. There are multitudes who represent lawless and frivolous pleasures, wasting and demoralizing. There are those who represent avarice and selfishness. There are many who live below moral influences, and the nature of whose life is such that it, as it were, cuts them, and drives them out from the temple, and the mansion, into the mountain, and the cave, and the sepulchre.

These men huddle together in classes; and, as in the instance of the history which we have selected, they assume that, for the time being, at any rate, they have rights which men have no call to meddle with. They assume that, whatever there may be by and by, after the judgment-day, and whatever may be their relations to God's law, they have rights as creatures of human society which their neighbors are bound to respect, and which they are not to meddle with nor disturb. They admit that virtue and piety perhaps have their territory; but then, they think, "So has vice, and so has license." And they say, substantially, "Let us respect each other's rights. We do not take away your Sunday from you; do not you take our Sunday from us. We do not tell you what you shall do with your Sundays; nor shall you tell us what we shall do with our Sundays. We do not meddle with your churches; what business have you to meddle with our grog-shops and our gardens? We do not meddle with your tools;

why do you undertake to destroy the tools by which we are building, like artifices, the structure of our wealth? You follow your ideas of what will make you happiest; let us follow our ideas of what will make us happiest. We do not want your way, and you do not want ours. So let us alone. Art thou come to torment us before our time? Go away!"

That is the attitude to-day, of the criminal class. And by the *criminal class* I mean, not merely those that break the laws, but the whole of that vast number of men who cater to such appetites as lead them to make criminals. The makers of criminals are more guilty than the criminals that they make. They who lay the foundations for the destruction of men by inciting them to evil through their appetites and passions, are the architects of damnation in the world, and are the wickedest of men. Not the man that drinks, but the man who puts the cup to his neighbor's lips, is the most wicked. Not the man that steals, but the man who makes a haunt for the production of thieves, rears them, nourishes them, and insures them, is the culprit—the arch-demon.

The attempt to cast out these demoniac influences is met with violent outcry. Men say, "It is an invasion of our prescriptive rights." They charge us with being busybodies in other men's matters. They say that if every man would mind his own business, society would be a great deal better off. They say, "This constant spying into other people's conduct, this constant meddling with other people's tastes and pursuits, only stirs up ill-will, and does no good." They say, "Let every man mind his own business. That is the first and supreme law"—though they have some higher counsel than this in the utterances, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others;" "Ye are the light of the world;" "Ye are the salt of the earth;" "Freely ye have received, freely give." In the ordination which Christ gave, the command is, "Cast out devils," as well as, "Preach the Gospel." All these things would seem to indicate a different doctrine; but this is the popular sentiment, and the clamor of the basilar parts of society to-day, that men have a certain right to follow their baser appetites and passions. The claim is, that you have no right to invade their territory; that you have no right to bring the light to bear upon them so as disturb their consciences; that you have no right to subject them to influences which shall restrain or regulate their action.

Now, I claim the right to meddle in such cases. More than that, I claim that I have the authority to do it, and that I am under obligation to do it. I hold that every community is bound to govern by its highest sentiments; and I claim sovereignty for the representative ideas of the highest sentiments in the community. As the

head is the master of the body, so that part of the mind which represents intelligence and moral purity is the natural lord and sovereign of that part of the organism which represents the animal appetites and passions.

And as it is in the individual, so it is in human society. The upper class should govern. By *the upper class*, I do not mean that class which is made *upper* by the accident of wealth or hereditary position; I do not mean those who merely represent externalities; I mean those who represent that deep, true manhood which God designed for the world—those who represent purity in sentiment, purity in love, purity in faith, hope, zeal, conscience, equity, honor, and beneficence. Men in whom these great elements predominate, I call *the upper class*. And I hold that, as they are the cleansing elements, as they are appointed to be what winds are to the atmosphere, or what running water is to the stagnant pool, as they are to be the cleansers of the world, they are the natural lords of all classes that are beneath them. The earth belongs to the soul's highest faculties.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." It is an inheritance that they will have to fight for; but they shall have it. The time is coming when men who represent the highest moral qualities, in their sweetest and most attractive form; the time is coming when men who represent the mind in its serenest and most luminous, nay, supereminent power, shall inherit the earth. And they have a right to begin their inheritance just as soon as they can. They have a right to attempt it anywhere. The earth belongs, not to animals, but to men. And among men, the earth, every community, belongs, not to the animal part, but to the divine part.

I claim for reason and moral sentiment the right to make laws; the right to execute laws; the right to create public sentiment; the right by public sentiment to coerce wickedness; the right to cleanse communities, and to make men who corrupt them feel the power of that which Christ used in driving the money-changers out of the temple. This natural sovereignty I claim for goodness over badness; for virtue over vice; for order over disorder; for that which elevates and saves men over that which corrupts and destroys them.

The malign passions torment men and torment society in such a way that whatever may be the guises and pretenses, mere benevolence demands that there shall be a perpetual warfare against them. There is in common humanity reason enough for interfering with corruption, either organized or in individual instances. You would never see a man suffer bodily harm, and disown the obligations of charity. Every body reads, and loves to read, the parable of the Good Samaritan. He was on a journey, you know. There had been two travelers before him. The first was a priest. He saw the

man cast down; but then he belonged to the high-church, and this man did not; and it was not his business to meddle with him. The Levite saw him, and passed by on the other side, and did not meddle with him, because he did not belong to his order, or set, or class in society. But the Samaritan, whom the Jews esteemed as about the most despicable of creatures, proved a true man; he came, he went where he was, and relieved his troubles. And "Good Samaritan" has now become a sign of charity everywhere. You shall see it on apothecary shops, and even on firemen's banners. There are *Good Samaritan* Lodges. There is a *Good Samaritan* this, a *Good Samaritan* that, and a *Good Samaritan* the other. All men believe in this meddlesomeness of the Good Samaritan. A man in trouble appeals to the sympathy of every body in the world; and if it is only a bodily trouble, men respond to it.

You are living in a community, not where one man is beset by thieves and robbers, but where five thousand, ten thousand, twenty thousand men are beset by thieves and robbers. Society is full of men who are being destroyed by their passions. "Ah! by their passions!" you say; "that is another matter." Yes, it is another matter; but it is a matter that is a great deal worse. If a man breaks into my house, and steals what he can get, my neighbors are full of sympathy for me in view of my loss; but if liquor breaks into my house, and steals my reason and conscience, though men go by and say, "Pity! pity!" they do not feel half as much sympathy for me, now, when my loss is invisible, as they did when it was visible.

The bondage into which young men and maidens are continually being brought by corruption in its most attractive forms; the contaminating influences, the pitfalls, the lures which prey, and live to prey, on the community, are literally wasting myriads and millions of these our fellow-beings. We read about the old Minotaur of antiquity that required a virgin to be sacrificed every year, and that was destroyed by Theseus; but we have crawling in the slime at the bottom of society, not one, but whole broods, of monsters, that live by corrupting and devouring men and women. The number that are sacrificed is enormous. The process of destruction is going on all the time. There is the breaking down of habits of industry; there is addiction to vice in its various forms; there is the loss of wealth and reputation; there is the undermining of health; and at last there is death, and damnation after death. We know these things, and see them all the time.

A young man comes down to the city, fresh and joyous, from his country home, and his eye is sparkling, and his countenance is clear, and his heart is pure; and in one short year, any one who is practiced in physiognomy sees in him the signs of corruption. Tell me

not that I can not read the mouth. Tell me not that I can not read the cheeks. Tell me not that I do not know what those marks on the face mean. I know what the matter is, frequently, before I hear the facts in the case. I oftentimes discern that a young man is on the way to ruin, without being told. There are whole classes that live to catch and destroy young men. And in the case of many a one, before two years have passed, his reputation is gone; and before three years have passed, his prospects in life are gone; and before five years have passed, alas! he is carried home to his native village, and his broken-hearted father and mother follow all that there is left of him to the grave, and heap the turf over it! And woe to the parents that can not speak the name of a child except by going back to his early life! Woe to the parents of that child of whose later life, of whose blossoming, there is nothing to be said, so that when they talk of him they can only talk of what he was when he was a boy, and what they hoped he would become! Why, one such instance as that ought to stir up a whole community to indignation. And yet such instances are as thick as hail in a storm. Every village has them. And when we go in to cast out the devils that are, with their avaricious maws, devouring men, and that are never satisfied, but are forever hungry, they say, "Art thou come to torment us before our time? Why do you not attend to your own business, and not interfere with our rights?" Over such men, who claim the right, and make it their business, to destroy the young, the inexperienced, and the weak, I declare the authority of truly benevolent men who seek to rescue and save these victims.

We should oppose these malign influences from self-interest, and in-self-defense. It is not going away from our own affairs when we attempt to break down every thing that is destroying the industry, and order, and virtue, and well-being of the young in society, and corrupting society itself. Every man is to a very great extent dependent for his own prosperity upon the average conditions of the community in which he lives. A man is very much like a plant. If you put a plant in a pot of poor earth, there is no inherent force in the plant by which it can grow. The atmosphere, too, which surrounds the leaf, has much to do with the health and growth of the plant. But suppose a plant should be endowed with momentary intelligence, and should cry out and protest that it was potted in bad earth, and surrounded by poisonous vapors? and suppose the earth should say, "Mind your own business, and I will mind mine," and the atmosphere should say, "You take care of yourself, and I will take care of myself"? It would be very much like these enemies to society saying to us, when we raise our voice against them, "Mind your own business." That is just what we are doing. We are minding our own

business. Our business is to breathe and to grow, and we must have pure air and good soil. And if we are living in a community where we find our roots starved, and our leaves poisoned, we have a right to take care of ourselves and defend ourselves. A man depends for his prosperity and happiness upon the average condition of the community in which he lives. A man that lives in a virtuous community is like a man that lives on some mountain side, where the air is pure. A man that lives in a corrupt community is like a man that lives where the air is impure. And for the sake of our own well-being, and the well-being of our households, we have a right to resist these men who are destroying society by corrupting it.

Moreover, it is the interest of every man commercially, that the community in which he lives should be a pure, thrifty, God-fearing community, and that these vermin that infest it should be cleansed out of it. For who imposes upon society its burdens? The immense taxes, the millions and millions of dollars that are levied every year, and that increase fearfully from year to year, for the support of courts, and jails, and prisons, and penitentiaries, and insane asylums—who creates the necessity for these? I hold that the ends of society could be answered with one tenth part of the taxes that are every year levied and paid. Who is responsible for the other nine parts? Corruption, vice, wickedness. In the place of every man that will not work, some other man must do double work. Every virtuous man has to carry on his back a man that is vicious. It is the property of the man who is frugal and thrifty that society takes to make up the deficiencies of men that are thriftless and shiftless. The man that will not dissipate has to stand in the gap that is made by the scores of men that do dissipate. Since the beginning of the world the burdens of society have been carried by men that were good and virtuous; and the great majority of these burdens have been imposed by men that gave way to their passions and appetites.

I go along streets where I see dance-houses, and gambling dens, and drinking saloons, some burnished and glittering, and some base and low; and I say, "Here are my tax assessors. This explains why I have so much to pay every year." Every lock and every safe in the city of New-York is a testimony and a witness against knaves and villains. The excessive thickness of walls; the number of men that are employed to watch each other; the various apparatus by which society is controlled—these are rendered necessary by the corruption which springs from the basilar passions. And who pays for them? Honest men. So these passions are the thieves, and robbers, and despots, and demons who run up the bills, and the moral sentiments pay them. And I protest against it.

* Suppose I were a rich man, and I had a cellar full of wine—as I

have not—and suppose I found that there was a nest of scoundrels making their home in my larder, and cellar, and drinking my wine, and eating my meat, and having a jolly time at my expense; and suppose, on my going down and saying to them, “Clear out from here!” they should say, “What do you mean, meddling with us? It is an impertinence. Why do you not go up-stairs and mind your own business?”

All these men who are making it necessary that there should be laws, and magistrates, and courts, and prisons, are scoundrels in honest men’s cellars. They are drinking our wine, and eating our meat. And when we go down to drive them out, and say, “Manhood is to reign in this community,” they say, “It is not; beasthood is to reign here.” But I set manhood over against animalism, and declare that every man who has purity, and virtue, and patriotism, and love to God, and love to man, has a right to take by the throat every villain that is corrupting men. And I do not say it by permission. I do not get down on my knees and say, “Please let me preach these things!” I stand here and thunder them in your faces, and say, “Whether you take them or not, I shall preach them!” It is my right. It is not only my right, but it is my *duty*. I should be less than a man did I not do it.

More than that, we are bound to meddle with the demonized part of society. They who are the disciples of Christ, the Christ-men, the Christlike-men, are bound to go after the miserable creatures that night and day wander in the mountains and tombs, and howl, and cut themselves; because in a community like our own, from them proceeds largely the prevailing public sentiment.

If when the wind comes, it comes from the south, how mild and balmy it is, and how all things rejoice and grow! But if it wheels and comes from the north, how men shiver and button up their coats! What is the reason? In coming from the north it comes over wide wastes of snow. And suppose the snow should say, “I do not meddle with you!” It does; for, although the snow-banks and the ice-bergs do not come down here, the wind that comes from the north floats over them, and becomes surcharged with cold, and chills us. The silent and unmoving snow of the north does make the winds different from what they would otherwise be.

And the existence in the community of vast numbers of corrupt men takes out the tone of public sentiment. They are so related to us by votes, by political interests, and by business, they are connected with us in so many ways, directly or indirectly, they so appeal to the baser elements of society, that, if they do not corrupt us, they contaminate the atmosphere which we breathe, so that it is harder for us to live right. Our better impulses are chilled, and we are less no-

ble, less magnanimous, less heroic, in a community whose temperature is lowered by its basilar conditions.

Therefore I have a right to say to the devil in a man, "Come out of him!" I have a right to say it not only for my own sake, but for the sake of those who are dearest to me—my own household. I have a right to say it for the sake of my children, and my friends' and neighbors' children. I have a right to say it for the sake of the young of the whole community.

How we behold young men carried down to destruction! We see them go from the knees of the father, and from the arms of the mother; we hear one wild laugh of giddy and criminal folly; and then, after that, we hear only wails! We are sorry; we pity the parents; but if God were to come in judgment, and say to you, "Are you not guilty to some extent in this matter? Have you thrown the weight and power of all that is in you against those things in the community which were poisoning and destroying this young man?" what could you say? To be sure, you did not give the young man the cup; but that cup might have been moved far from him, if betimes you and other men had taken strong ground on this subject. To be sure, you did not seduce and drag down to destruction that maiden; but there was in your hands an unused power by which you might have quickened the moral sense of the community, and cast out the demoniac and tempting influences that were ruining her. And so the blood of our brethren rests upon us, in part. When we can lift up our hands to heaven, and say, "I have striven earnestly to banish out of society every thing that is evil," then, and then only, we can excuse ourselves before God.

I have a good deal of a certain sort of kind feeling for wicked men. I am sorry for them. Looking at them in one way, I have sympathy with them. I would serve them if I could. I would do all in my power to make them better. But, on the other hand, if they assume superiority over me, and tell me to hold my peace, I have forty men's spirits of indignation roused up in me! The idea that these very men that I know are exhaling from Stygian morasses a pestilential miasm which is poisoning my children, and my neighbors' children—the idea that they should arrogate superiority over me, and tell me to hold my peace, makes my blood boil! If a man should open a sty under the Heights, the signatures of all the men in the neighborhood would be obtained, declaring it a nuisance; and it would be abated quickly. When it is something that smells in the nose, men understand rights and duties, and they say, "No man has any business to create a nuisance in our midst;" and they resort to measures for compelling the offender to remove that by which he offends. Let a man start a mill for grinding arsenic, and let the air

be filled with particles of this deadly poison, and let it be noticed that the people in the neighborhood are beginning to sneeze and grow pale, and let it be discovered that this mill is the cause, and do you suppose he would be allowed to go on grinding? No. Men would shut up his establishment at once. And yet, men open those more infernal mills of utter destruction—distilleries, and wholesale and retail dens for liquor; and you can mark the streams of damnation that flow out from them; and yet nobody meddles with them. One man is getting carbuncles; another man is becoming red in the eyes; another man is growing irritable, and losing his self-control; another man is being ruined, both in body and mind; multitudes of men begin to exhibit the signs of approaching destruction; and the cause of all this terrible devastation may be traced to these places where intoxicating drinks are manufactured and sold. You would not let a man grind arsenic; but you will let a man make and sell liquor, though arsenic is a mercy compared with liquor. And I say that you have no right to suffer to exist in the community these great centres of pestilential influence that reck and fill the moral atmosphere with their poison. In those sections of the West where chill and fever prevails, counties combine and drain the swamps from which it comes. And in cities, and thickly-settled places, you have a right to suppress distilleries and grog-shops. You have not only a right to do it; but, as you love your country, your city, your fellow-men, your children, and your own selves, it is your *duty* to do it. It is your business to set your face against every demon that possesses man, and say, "By the authority of Christ I command thee to come out!"

The outcry that now is raised everywhere when good men attempt to keep the Sabbath day, belongs to this general subject. Men combine to keep order in the city, and to make simple, common virtues respectable and regnant; and I will admit that there is a certain sort of favor given by the papers to such endeavors; and yet, after all, they manifest a sneaking under-sympathy with the other side. They are so afraid that good men will not be discreet—that they will not be moderate! They are so afraid that things will not be done in the best taste! "There ought to be good judgment in all things," they say. Here are men that are doing the devil's work in the community; here are men that are foul and filthy, as if they slept in gutters; here are men that set fire to the passions; here are men that are murderers by the wholesale; here are men that are preparing fuel for endless destruction; and these men it is thought should not be disturbed! If we attempt to check them in their wicked course, we are rebuked for impertinence! "Why do you meddle with them?" it is said. "It is of no use. You can not make the world over

again. Men will be wicked. And besides, you ought to be discreet. You ought not to be running your head against a rock. Moderation! *moderation!* MODERATION!

I have taken notice that this cry of *moderation* comes to us always when we are attempting to carry out the law of the higher faculties, and never when we are acting under the inspiration of passion, or avarice, or ambition. Nobody ever says, "Moderation! *moderation!*" in Wall street. Nobody utters this cry in the purlieus of vice. It is in the doors of churches that men stand and give this warning. People seem to think that in works of disinterested benevolence, in devotion to missionary labor, men are going to rush pell-mell, like affrighted buffaloes, and that they need to be cautioned against going too fast and too far; but the overswollen and turbulent stream of passion is constantly sweeping by, and carrying multitudes without number to destruction, and nobody lifts up his window to look out and say, "Moderation!" No moderation is thought necessary for the lower faculties. All the moderation men believe in is in the higher nature. As if all our dangers came from the top of the head, instead of the bottom!

How disagreeable it is to see a young man taking on airs because his father was rich! He has nothing, or not much, in his head; but he has a great deal in his pocket; and so he swaggers, and puts on airs. How extremely disagreeable it is! And how disagreeable it is to see the whittled-down remnant of a great man, who, because his father had a name, forever lies and sucks at the breast of his ancestor's reputation! How we despise an aristocracy founded on such a pretense! Yet there is such a thing as aristocracy, there is such a thing as nobility, that a man ought to feel, and feel keenly, to his fingers' ends. Not, however, because his father was great—though he may have a domestic pride in that; not because his father was rich—though there is a rational ground for being glad on that score. But where a man feels, "I am born of the truth; I am a son of God; I belong to virtue; I love it; it is mine, as is also conscience, and faith, and rectitude; all my aims are toward God; he is my witness; and he and I are workers together;" where a man has given himself over wholly to the side of God, and humanity, and truth, and duty, I like to see him walk straight. I like to see a truth-speaking man look down on liars. I like to see a man every fibre of whose life is full of integrity and honor look down on miscreant dishonesty with withering contempt. I like to see the aristocracy of conscience and of goodness. God's men are better than the devil's men, and they ought to act as though they thought they were. Every man that is virtuous and pure is superior to all men who are vicious and impure, and ought to act as though he felt so.

Men ought to stand on the side of duty, and on the ground of goodness, and assert the grandeur and dignity of rectitude over immorality, and every thing that is allied to it. It is time that we understood these things, and acted according to our real character and prerogatives.

You may ask, "What shall we do?" The first step that every man should take in this matter is to ascertain whether he is willing to do any thing. Are you willing everywhere to be a witness for the truth? Are you willing to unite with others in bearing testimony to it? Are you willing to seek the light, and to speak out your sentiments? Are you willing to make known what you are, and what the truth is, and what your duty is, and what men's obligations are? Are you willing to rebuke wickedness by your words and by your example? Are you willing to be a worker? Are you willing to be a soldier in the army of the Lord? If you are, God will reveal to you what you can do. First see to it that you have a willing heart, and then your duty shall be interpreted to you step by step. Wherever you go, do not be afraid of those that are wicked. Count yourself their better. Count yourself higher than any man who violates conscience, and violates the plain laws of God. Refuse to be patronized, and refuse to be flattered, by men that hold power and place and wealth only for the sake of perverting them to the ends of selfishness and avarice and lust.

Remember that just now all the great agencies of society are limping. Just now it is the carnival of corruption. Just now we are in danger from money. The Red Sea that seemed divided to let the people go over, is coming together again; and not Pharaoh alone is going to be whelmed, but many and many Israelites will be found lying in the bottom of the sea, too. Just now it would seem as though vice had wondrous license. I love my country, my State, and the city in which I dwell; and I am personally wronged and grieved when I behold such corruption as exists in high places; and I see no remedy for it at present except the creation of a better public sentiment. Out of this shall come the remedial forms by which society shall reorganize itself, and destroy all its enemies. But first we want clear opinions founded on moral premises. Then we want outspoken men, to take these opinions and disseminate them. If we can not create a Christian public sentiment in our cities and towns and villages, if we can not surround our courts and legislatures with a rectifying public sentiment, I do not know what is to become of us. We are getting far along on the road of destruction.

My historical hope is in the fact that England has had a career of enormous corruption, and has overcome it. Many nations have seen periods in which they dipped far down; but through simple

moral resiliency, they rebounded and came up again. And I have a general and vague impression that we shall get over the corruption into which we are falling. At present the symptoms are very bad. The patient is almost in a collapse. And it is a time when men should feel that mere doctrine is not enough. Not that we should omit the preaching of doctrine. We should preach doctrine; but doctrine is a bow, and morality is an arrow, and we are to draw doctrine to the shoulder, and take aim, and send the twanging arrow to the very heart of corruption, wherever we are. We are not to intermit any of the ordinary duties of life, but we are to give them direction and application, and they are to take on a power. We have been saved, in the providence of God, from one gigantic evil; but we have bounded over into the evils of avarice; and never was there a time since I was born when such behemoths of iniquity stalked the streets as to-day. There was never a time when avarice, like some vast monster, so browsed on society, as a huge elephant with his great trunk breaks down the branches of trees, crunching them for his own digestion. These monsters, these ichthyosauri, are known. Their names are familiar. And it is time that the churches took the alarm. It is time that Christian ministers took the alarm. It is time that patriotic citizens took the alarm. It is time that men began to take counsel with each other, and look each other in the eye. And all men that love virtue, and truth, and purity should stand together, and, with the Master before them, say to the monster, as he said to the unclean spirit, "I command thee to come out."

May God purify the state and the city. May God purify the citizens.



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE draw near to thee, our Heavenly Father, with gratitude and with thanksgiving. At thine hands we have experienced bounties innumerable, joys more than we can tell, mercies inexpressible. What tongue can speak of the kindnesses which thou hast manifested toward us, by the great realm of nature, which thou hast ordained to serve us, and which is the minister of thy bounty; by all the blessings which thou hast sent into life through society; and by all the over-rulings of thy providence by which the events of every day have conspired together for our good; but, above all, by thine own precious self, by Jesus, our Master and companion, and by the power of the Holy Ghost, through which we commune with thee, and by which our life is lifted up above the flesh, and holds sacred and blessed companionship with thy life? Thus, we are indeed the sons of God, not alone by thine innumerable bounties and gifts, but by our daily habit of life. By all our thoughts, by all our affections, by every spiritual sentiment, we are brought into this companionship, and are the sons of God in very deed.

Oh! that there were in us that spirit which should make manifest more gloriously the power of God on the human soul. Oh! that, since we are sons, we might show ourselves princes. Oh! that there might be such luminousness in every thought, in all virtues, in every affection, that they should shine out, and men should behold them. We beseech of thee, O Lord our God! that we may come more and more, every day, into this blessed communion, and that, going forth, our faces may shine, and that men may know where we get our inspiration; where our comfort comes from; whence are all the gifts by which we are made strong in our combat with grief, with temptation, and with wickedness in high places.

We pray, O God! that thou wilt comfort any that are beginning this life, and that see men as trees walking. Touch their eyes again. Grant that they may see clearly. May all those that are striving to follow thee, but that see the discrepancy between their ideal and their real life, and mourn over it, be comforted and encouraged to persevere.

We beseech of thee that those who are tempted and carried by gusts of passion out of the way, and find themselves disheveled and turned upside down, like men that are whirled in the tempest, may not give up in despair, but gather again their energies, and attempt once more to walk the royal way. Let none, having once put his hand to the plow, turn back. May no one count himself unworthy of eternal life.

Oh! that every one of us might behold the coming glory, and be inspired with the thought of the joy and dignity to come. May every one of us take hold of present duty. And though we are filled with weaknesses, and are conscious every day of sins; though infirmities multiply themselves without number on every side, and the carriage in us of thought and feeling and sentiment is most imperfect; though our whole life is illiterate, untaught, in things spiritual, yet may we look forward, and "*press forward, toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*"

Blessed be that provision by which thou dost accept and minister to our weaknesses. Thou dost take us, not because we are good, but because in thine infinite love thou wilt make us good. Thou dost take us as little orphan children are taken, that they may be befriended, and brought up into strength of virtue. Thou, O blessed Saviour! art the Saviour of sinners, and thou dost come to seek and to save the most needy, and the most wretched; and there is mercy to the uttermost. And therefore we are not consumed. Therefore we may hope, we may have courage. And we beseech of thee that it may comfort us in our desponding hours; that it may animate us to preach the Gospel, not alone to those that are near at hand, but to those that are afar off. May all who name thy name have an impulse given them, to make known the unsearchable riches of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We pray, O Lord our God! that thy cause may thrive; that truth may prevail; that virtue may supplant vice; that order may take the place of disorder. We beseech of thee that the conscience of the great public may be educated of God, and enlightened by the Holy Ghost. We pray that there may be nobler men, and that our magistrates may rise above the temptations of the magistracy. We beseech thee for the purification of our courts, for the purification of our magistrates, and for the purification of the government. May all those that are appointed to places of power and trust be men that fear God, and that love righteousness. And we beseech of thee that we may not be whelmed in destruction by the passions. May there be reformation throughout this great people. Now that thou hast wrought for us so wonderfully in the eyes of all men, we

beseech of thee that we may not grow turbulent—that we may not be warlike and quarrelsome. We beseech of thee that we may use our power for justice and for mercy. May we not despoil the weak. May we not seek to draw down those that are less and poorer than we. May it be our mission to preach the gospel of mercy and of humanity, of truth and of liberty, all over the world. May it be our pride to be at peace and to gain victories by the power of truth, more than by the power of our hands.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the nations of the earth. Oh! that they might recognize the relationship which thou hast established between man and man. Oh! that the feeling of a common Christ, and a common Saviour, and a common God, as the one Father, might unite the peoples of the earth, and that there might be more of a true Christian brotherhood in a common hope, in a common sense of weakness, and in a common aspiration for excellence and glory in the life that is to come. And so may woes cease, and oppressions cease, and wrongs cease, and all purities, and all truths, and all justice, and all piety be established, in all the earth.

Hear us in these our petitions, and answer us, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we beseech of thee, as thou hast taught us by thine example, in thy blessed Son, our Saviour, so enable us to quicken in ourselves that life which was in him. And may we in changed circumstances know how wisely to carry out the same truths and the same principles of life. Have compassion upon those who are tempted more than they are able to bear. Give a better mind to those who are their tempters. May those whose eyes stand out with fatness, who have more than heart could wish, whom pride compasseth as a chain, who lift up their face against God and man, and defy all things, feel the silent power of thine omnipotence. Beat down these wicked oppressors to the ground. And we beseech of thee, thou that hast destroyed Satan and all his works, destroy in our midst Satan and all his works. Cleanse us, purify us, and make us a God-fearing people.

Hear us in these our supplications, and answer us, for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

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
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